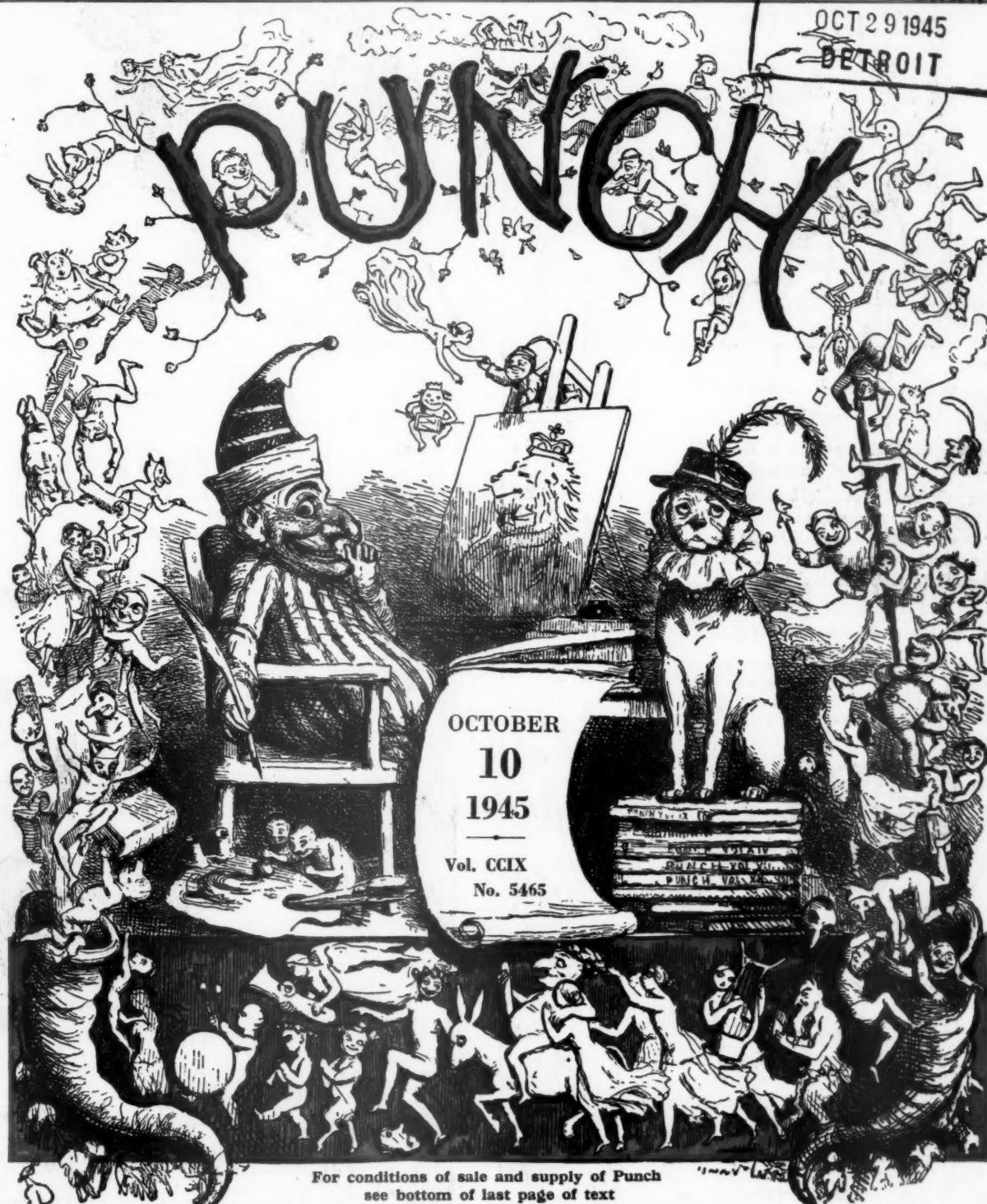


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If you still find Horlicks difficult to get, it is because so many continue to have special need of it. For six years Horlicks has gone to the fighting forces, the hospitals, and war factories. Many of these needs must still be met.

Meanwhile, nearly as much Horlicks is reaching the shops as in 1939 — but many more people are asking for it today. If you still find Horlicks difficult to get, remember that any extra supplies must still go to those who have special need of it. And make Horlicks by mixing it with water only. The milk is already in it.

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Zoned, like all cereals, but perhaps YOU live in a Weetabix area
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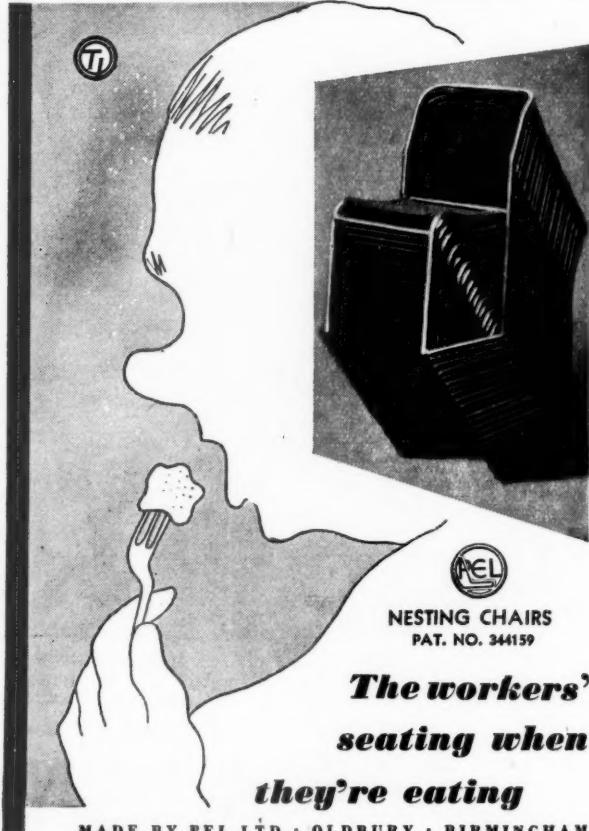


I am the Steelworker *

—THE MOTOR INDUSTRY HELPS TO KEEP ME IN MY JOB—SO

TAKE THE BRAKE OFF
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but she keeps her charm

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The war has done many things to most of us. Those, for instance, who regularly looked forward to their Fortts BATH OLIVER Biscuits in peace-time may now find them not always easy to obtain. But it can't be helped! Wartime conditions must be met. If you still have to go short, rest assured, you will be able to enjoy them again in full measure when materials are available.

Fortts
ORIGINAL
BATH
OLIVER
BISCUITS



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When you do land a tin—what a triumph! Richly fragrant, full-flavoured coffee, made right in the cup. No bother, no messy grounds; no coffee-pot to wash. Nescafé spells all the enjoyment—none of the drawbacks—of really delicious coffee. Unfortunately supplies of Nescafé do not yet keep pace with growing demand.

NESCAFÉ IS A SOLUBLE COFFEE PRODUCT
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By appointment to

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You're telling me.

but of course I know
THAT
**CARR'S of
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HAVE MADE
THE BEST BISCUITS
FOR OVER 100 YEARS
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NO COUPONS

No matter how much or how little you already have, so long as you are a healthy life you can always apply for more LIFE ASSURANCE.

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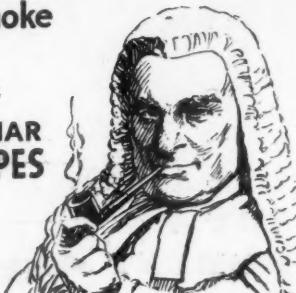
All shrewd Judges smoke



The demand for Orlik pipes far exceeds the supply, but the quality is still as good as ever. If you have difficulty in obtaining a genuine Orlik London-made pipe, please write to us for address of the nearest Tobacconist who can supply you.

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Orlik wind-proof Petrol Lighters give a sure light for cigarette or pipe, indoors or out.
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I'VE SAID GOODBYE TO
Sleeplessness



The nightly cup of Allenbrys Diet taken at bedtime induces that sound, refreshing sleep so vital to the recuperation of energy, especially with people of advancing years.

This delicious food-drink does not tax the most delicate digestion. Fresh, creamy milk and whole wheat, supply in an easily-assimilated form the vital nutriment for building up frayed nerves and depleted body-cells.

From all Chemists, 4/6 a tin.
(Temporarily in short supply.)

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DIET**

Made in England by Allen & Hanburys, Ltd.



The remembrance of these things will prove a source of future pleasure

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VOTRIX VERMOUTH SWEET OR DRY 9/- Vine Products Ltd., Kingston, Surrey

SEAGERS



GIN

MAXIMUM RETAIL PRICE
25/3 per bottle.

October 10 1945

PUNCH or The London Charivari

v

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Try Scrubb's in your bath. A few drops soften the water, refresh and invigorate.

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THE GOOD-TEMPERED SHEFFIELD BLADE

CVS-20

Ever counted what you spend on

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Laurel blades—1½d. each includ-

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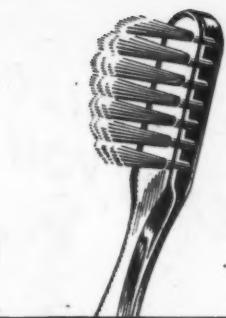
least as long as any blade you can

buy, and they'll give a smooth, easy

shave for a long, long time. No

better blade comes out of Sheffield,

the 'home of the cutting edge'.



Tek

HARD TO GET
BECAUSE IT'S
HARD TO BEAT



The toothbrush
you can trust



BRISTLES 2/- Plus Purchase Tax 5d.
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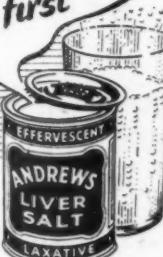
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For a clean
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For deep-down Inner Cleanliness, take Andrews regularly — not necessarily every day but as often as the system needs its health-giving aid. See how Andrews cleanses:

FIRST .. Andrews refreshes the mouth and helps to clean the tongue.

NEXT .. Andrews settles the stomach and corrects acidity, the chief cause of indigestion.

THEN .. Andrews tones up the liver and checks biliousness.

FINALLY for Inner Cleanliness, Andrews gently clears the bowels, relieves constipation and purifies the blood.

For Inner Cleanliness be regular with your

ANDREWS

Family size tin 2/-

Guaranteed to contain 8 ozs.

(55-12)

**A BISCUIT
KEEPS YOU GOING...**

As a compact energy food Biscuits are easily carried and make a meal in a moment.

Issued by the Cake & Biscuit Manufacturers War Time Alliance Ltd.
QVB-120

**FINE,
THANKS!**

I eat something crisp and crunchy every day.

When I can get it,
I prefer **RYVITA**

RYVITA

CRISP, NOURISHING DAILY BREAD

JAEGER



Yet another of the many JAEGER children's garments is this Apron Shorts which makes an attractive, yet sensible play-suit, suitable for boys and girls. In grey, navy and brown flannel, to fit children from two to six. It costs from 12/6 and 4 coupons upwards according to size.

JAEGER HOUSE, 204 REGENT ST., W.I., OR GO TO YOUR NEAREST JAEGER

Drink with a clear conscience

At present Lembar can be drunk with a clear conscience only if you're ill enough to need it. Lembar is made from pure Lemon juice, glucose, finest barley and best white sugar. In normal times it's everyone's drink: at present it's earmarked for sufferers from colds, 'flu, fevers or biliousness (sufferers from thirst excluded).

**RAYNER'S medicinal
Lembar**

Obtainable from chemists

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PUNCH

OR

THE LONDON CHARIVARI

Vol. CCIX No. 5465

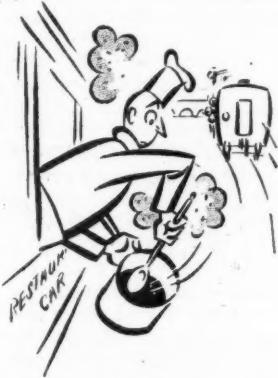


October 10 1945

Charivaria

EXPERTS are confident that current financial trends will not adversely affect the value of the pound, so presumably it will continue to be worth the full six or seven shillings.

• • •
Ensa, it is pointed out, was organized soon after hostilities commenced. We had the impression that hostilities commenced soon after Ensa was organized.



• • •
America is settling down so comfortably after the war that anybody would think she had lost it.

• • •
"Restaurant cars are coming back this winter," says a rail-news report. That's just the trouble; they're always going the opposite way.

• • •
There is a controversy in America as to whether the recent hostilities should be called World War Two, the Global War or the Last War. As far back as 1918 it was generally referred to as the Next War.

• • •
As a critic points out, leading film actresses have inevitably aged somewhat during the war years. Lots of them who were twenty-nine before 1939 must now be getting on towards thirty.

Free Gifts Department

"Angora Crochet Gloves, 15s. 6d. per pair, I coupon; blue, green, brown, scarlet, camel. Cash and coupons with order, money refunded."

Advt. in daily paper.

• • •
Ready-money betting has been stopped at Newmarket. The police are responsible, but bookies can still run away with all the credit.

Alarm-clocks made in Scotland have reached London shops. Purchasers claim that it is quite refreshing to hear a Northern burr instead of a nasal twang.

• • •
Secret documents just unearthed reveal that Hitler distrusted Japan. Between them they would have nicely completed the World Peace Conference.

• • •
Nobody can call this a phoney peace. It is raging most realistically.

• • •
A retired butler says that dignity and discretion are necessary for a successful career. He has nothing but contempt for the butler who sells the film rights of his life to the proprietor of seaside slot-machines.



• • •
If present Big Five misunderstandings can be cleared, it will enable them to get down to the opening up of an extensive new field of problems.

• • •
"What is a Musical Person?" a correspondent inquires. Consult any two neighbours with one radio.



• • •
In one district householders have to deliver their own coal. Very warming, too, while it lasts.

Hardly

"The parley was most difficult since the interpreter hardly spoke English, being the former Scotch whisky agent for Japan."—*Ceylon paper.*

• • •
"I have very cold feet at night but my wife is unable to buy me a hot-water bottle," says a correspondent. This is indeed a case of hardship, and she has our sympathy.

Through Pink Spectacles

I OBSERVE a complaint that America has produced a film, giving the whole credit for the atomic bomb to American scientists and saying nothing about our own. There should be no such complaint. America, in developing the film industry (who, by the way, invented the cinematograph?) has long ago re-invented history. But, on the whole, the movie men have been very just. There is no film out of Hollywood which proves:

That an American signed Magna Carta,
That Americans invented the plough, the wheel and
the spade,
That Americans discovered America,
That the Americans were the original inhabitants of
Palestine,
That America created the world.

I should rather like to write the scenario of the last of these.

* * * * *

It should be noted in the meantime (or any other time) that whereas America has inherited science, history, wealth and virtue, Russia (without any meekness) is inheriting the earth. Some people complain about this also. But let them remember how extremely cold, rocky and disagreeable a great part of the earth happens to be. Who would want to inherit Siberia?

* * * * *

The men that I most want to come to my house at present are the painter, the plumber, the carpenter and the man who connects the telephone. But they do not come. It is not very difficult, I am told, to connect a telephone, and I fancy there must be two or three million men at arms, and waiting to be demobilized, who could easily accomplish the feat. But prayers and letters of entreaty and telephone calls from other places have so far not availed.

Yet how many men do come to my house! The postman calls with punctual rates and bills. The milk arrives. How astonished our great-grandfathers would have been to see the produce of so many cows distributed by so many piebald ponies in so many bottles on every door-step of our great metropolis! It is wonderful how much consolation one can derive from the imagined bewilderment of one's ancestors. The dustmen come. How astonished our great—but no, let the poor old fellows sleep in their quiet graves. Even the laundry comes. If it came oftener, how far fewer shirts I should have!

This reminds me of the curious story of a lady who went to fetch her own washing. She took it away on a bus, and put it under the staircase that leads to the top. Then she began to think about something else, and got off without it. The bus went on. By amazing good fortune she got a taxi-cab. "Follow that bus!" she cried. They came to the next red lights. She left the cab and went to the bus. It was the wrong bus. Her own had passed it and gone by while the lights were green. She was getting off when they turned again. The taxi-cab, not waiting to be paid, slipped through first. "Follow that taxi-cab!" she cried. They never caught it. She explained her troubles to the bus-conductor. "The bus I was on had a conductress," she said.

"Tall or short?" "Fairly tall."
"Skirts or trousers?" "Trousers, I think."
"Pale face?" "Fairly pale."
"Sort of green eyes?" "Sea-green."

"Red hair?" "A kind of auburn."

"Best thing you can do is to hop off at the next stop, go over the road, and wait till she comes round again." She did so, and got her basket in the end.

"Red as a tomato, I should call it," he said as she got off. Most bus-conductors grow tomatoes.

* * * * *

There are too many unwarranted complaints about the London Passenger Transport Board. The best way to get a place on the bus when the buses are full is to walk to a place at which more people get off than on.

Walking is a very beautiful exercise. If everybody followed my simple plan—but I shall try to work this out a little further before I write again.

* * * * *

When there are more buses the traffic will be so congested that walking will save time.

* * * * *

Wars should really be fought by nations of industrious *fakirs*, teetotal, feeding on herbs and roots, wearing almost nothing in the summer, and half-dressed sheepskins when the winter comes. Given a proper supply of coal and iron, inventive genius, and indomitable courage, these men must conquer the world. The fact that a fairly lazy nation of hearty eaters, heavy drinkers and incorrigible smokers has won through to victory should give us a feeling of immense pride and satisfaction. The amount of energy we have spent in trying to buy cigarettes when there were none to buy would have driven ten battleships for a year.* I should lay my money on one of the Mohammedan peoples to win the next world-war, if it were not that the Mohammedan peoples prefer to fight with swords.

* * * * *

There is no real shortage of food so far as England is concerned. All round the shores of this island there are patiently waiting long anxious queues of dogfish, catfish, hake and sea-bream waiting to be caught and ambitious to appear on our tables as halibut, plaice and turbot. The wild rabbit roams through a thousand warrens thinking proudly of the day when he will be able to delight us as a chicken casserole. And in the garden, what carrots, what dandelions, what wild parsley, what a wealth of bitter acrimony, with its yellow star-like flowers!

* * * * *

If a man tells you that he is depressed by the trouble in India, answer him gently by saying: "India is not a country. It is a sub-continent. How would you like to be made the Viceroy of Africa?" While he is considering this appointment you can walk away.

* * * * *

Whenever some small trouble arises in your business or domestic affairs, say to yourself: "It was much worse at the end of the last Great War." If you were only an infant in arms at the end of the last Great War it is much easier to convince yourself that this is true. At any rate, nobody gave me a nice dark grey suit with a pin-stripe, nor a packet of chocolate, at the end of the last Great War. At the end of the next Great War there may be a lump of sugar and an orange.

* * * * *

Philosophy is what counts. It counts far more easily than arithmetic.

EVOE.

*This calculation has been disputed by naval engineers.



TARGET FOR CHRISTMAS



"Well, gentlemen, there's ONE person on the staff who'll be more than delighted to hear you've been demobilized."

Civvy Street

WELL—the garden ain't what you'd call flourishin'.
You can't see the spuds for the weeds.
The meat-ration ain't really nourishin',
But I s'pose it's enough for my needs.
The kids 'ave shot up like young rockets,
And they've got just a bit out of 'and.
With three, you can't keep well-lined pockets,
But I wouldn't swap one—they're just grand.
The baby's a proper young article
('Adn't seen 'im before, by the way).
The Missus ain't altered a particle,
Though she says I'm blind—she's gone grey.
My old clothes don't fit me no longer—
And I'd stowed 'em away with such care.
I've more tummy, my shoulders are stronger.
There's only my ties I can wear!

The old job don't seem such a trifle,
In six years I've just lost the knack—
Should be easy as cleaning my rifle.
I ain't worried, though—soon get it back.
Maybe I was one o' the grousers.
There was gloomy old blokes comin' round
Who'd polished the seat o' their trousers
Through the war for a daily five pound.
An' they'd say "Don't you be in no 'urry
To get out o' the Army, my man.
You'll be missing a 'ole lot o' worry
If you stay in as long as you can."
Well, Civvy Street ain't all beer and skittles,
But you've your 'ome and your family—see?
You've your job. You eats your own
victuals.
And—you may feel the pinch, but you're free.

Assistant Masters : Are They Insane?

An Hour After Break

(From the papers of Mr. A. J. Wentworth, assistant master at Burgrove Preparatory School, Wilminster, whose earlier jottings appeared in these pages in 1938-39.)

PEOPLE ask me sometimes whether I find the schoolboy of to-day, the boy, that is, who has grown to prep.-school age during the war years, noticeably quieter and more mature than his elder brother of pre-war days. I cannot see it. I detect precious little difference in the young rascals. More knowledgeable perhaps on some subjects, aircraft modelling to take an obvious instance, but as bone-headed as ever over the important things. I can still twist their tails with a simultaneous quadratic; and it is still just as difficult to make them see that unless they stick to a problem, really worry at it, for themselves, instead of throwing up their hands and shouting "Sir, Sir," at the slightest set-back, they will never make mathematicians.

And the time we waste. Yesterday, after break, I told Set IIIA to write down $\frac{1}{3}$ as a decimal.

"Everybody finished?" I asked.

"No, sir," said Mason. He is a brother of another Mason who used to be here, and very like him in some ways.

I gave him another half-minute and then told him to stop.

"But it won't stop, sir."

Everybody laughed.

"I mean it goes on and on, sir, and if I stop before it does my answer won't be right."

"What have you got, Mason?"

"Well, sir, so far I've got point three three—that's correct to seventeen decimal places, sir."

"There's nothing to laugh about!" I said sharply. "What have you got there, Tremayne?"

"Me, sir? Point three recurring, sir."

"I am not asking for the answer to the sum. I am asking you what you have got in your right hand."

"Nothing, sir."

Boys invariably try this answer first, though they must know they have precious little chance of getting away with it with an old hand like me. Tremayne had that boiled look that tells you at once when a boy is caught out.

"Bring it up here, Tremayne," I said. "And the rest of you express point seven three five as a fraction."

I wrote it up on the board to stop endless questions and then took the piece of paper Tremayne handed to me.

He had simply scribbled the headmaster's name, "Rev. Gregory Saunders, M.A.", on the paper, and I was about to send him back to his desk with a caution against wasting the time of the form when I noticed that the paper was folded over at the bottom.

"An old dodge, Tremayne," I said, unfolding it.

He had written "The Beast of Burgrove" under the headmaster's name, a serious offence.

"I can't possibly overlook this, Tremayne," I told him sternly.

"Couldn't you overlook it on his birthday, sir?" asked Mason.

"Is it your birthday, Tremayne?" I asked.

"No, sir."

"In that case, Mason, I fail to see the point of your remark. Even if it was any business of yours—"

"I was only wondering, sir, whether if it had been his birthday, it would have made any difference. Because my brother told me you were awfully decent about—"

"Mason!" I warned him. "That will do. When I want your advice, or your brother's, about the way to treat people on their birthday, I will ask for it. Birthdays make no difference to the fact that we've all come here to work, and the sooner everyone realizes that the better."

"Is it your birthday, sir?" somebody called out, and there was an immediate chorus of cries from the other boys. "Jolly good, Gandhi," "Wake up, Gandhi," "Have some more goat's milk, Mahatma," and a lot more nonsense of the same kind, which I very soon stamped on. Gandhi is not the boy's real name, of course (though we have quite a number of French and Belgians here now, and a little Dutch boy called de Groot came this term); but the others call him that because of some fancied resemblance to the Indian leader.

"Now then," I said. "Let's see who's got this fraction right. Parkinson?"

"Not quite ready yet, sir."

"Hurry up, boy. Mathers?"

"Well, sir, I've done it, only it seems rather an absurd answer."

"Never mind that," I said. "I'm used to absurd answers. What is it?"

"A hundred and forty-seven over two hundred."

"What's absurd about that? Well, Barrow?"

"I thought I heard the bell, sir."

I slammed my book down on the desk.

"If you would kindly attend to your work, instead of listening for the school bell, we might conceivably get through a fraction of what we have to do before the end of term—perhaps even a hundred and forty-seven two hundredths of it, Mathers."

"Jolly good, sir!" said Mason.

I told them they might go, and began to collect my things for my English period.

"May I go too, sir?" asked Tremayne, about whom, I am bound to confess, I had rather forgotten.

I took up a piece of chalk and tossed it in the air.

"What are we going to do about this, Tremayne?" I said. "Eh?"

"I don't know, sir. I'm sorry, sir."

"H'm!" I said, not knowing either. "I'll have to think about it."

I shall probably decide to do nothing in the end. The boy has had a good fright, which is the main thing.

H. F. E.

• •

Peace

"LONDON, Monday.—British soldiers in the South-east Asia Command are being issued with a new rifle weighing 5lb., 2lb. less than the present issue.

It has a barrel six inches shorter, and much less wood than the present model, and is easier to handle.

Its eight-inch flat steel bayonet, with a cutting edge on each side, replaces the 'spike' bayonet.

It is intended for use as a tin-opener and for dividing the jungle."—Australian paper.

At the Pictures

ERNIE AND JOE

It is called "ERNIE PYLE'S Story of G.I. Joe" (Director: WILLIAM A. WELLMAN); in fact, it is in a way G.I. Joe's story of ERNIE PYLE, the Scripps-Howard war correspondent who took for his special province the grandeur, miseries and humours of the infantryman—by whom he was naturally much beloved. It turns out to be a very good film indeed, one of the best films of the war. It shows *Pyle* (henceforth in these notes he appears in italics, being a character in a film) as the infantryman saw him, and one particular group of soldiers ("Company C, 18th Infantry") as *Pyle* saw them, from the time when he first got a lift on one of their trucks up to the line in North Africa, to the climax on the road to Rome. "Climax" is perhaps the wrong word, for there is no obvious pattern about the picture: it is a straightforward account of the progress of one group of men from half-cheerful, half-worried inexperience through disaster to toughness and the prospect of victory.

The incident by its nature cannot be very different from what you have seen in many war films—even the close view of the bitter fight for Cassino can be paralleled, in essentials—but the mud, the spectacular confusion, the grinding weariness, the despairs and hopes that affect the men who have to do the hard physical work of war have never been better, more impressively or more movingly shown. It was *Pyle's* aim to concentrate on the man, to write about individuals, to give the ordinary civilian an idea of the thoughts and emotions, as well as the actions and surroundings, of his fighting brother. This film does his memory proud, and it also does proud the soldiers he wrote about.

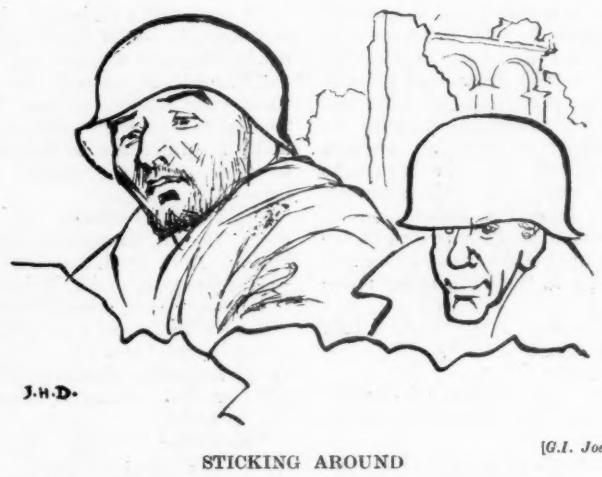
Pyle is sensitively and memorably played by BURGESS MEREDITH; and outstanding among a gallery of excellent smaller portraits is FREDDIE STEELE's of *Sergeant Warnicki*, whose spare moments for months were

released months hence, as belonging to the story of the man who very cleverly covered his traces after murdering his wife, only to be driven into betraying himself by the machinations (it is the only word) of a psychiatrist. Presumably those responsible for the choice of this title argued that the name of HUMPHREY BOGART was all that was needed to pack the customers in, and they may be right; but it is sad to realize that the existence of people who would go to see Mr. BOGART in a good film, but not necessarily in a poor one, is not even admitted as a possibility.

As it happens, *Conflict* is a good workmanlike "psychological thriller," which at intervals attains a painful degree of suspense, and Mr. BOGART's performance is first-rate. His recent succession of comparatively empty Hemingway-character parts had made me forget how well he can suggest an intellectually tormented

man (remember the impression he made in *The Petrified Forest* in 1936), and the mounting tension as circumstance after trifling circumstance strengthens the man's suspicion that his wife may be alive (and he has seen her dead) is very powerfully conveyed. SYDNEY GREENSTREET is the subtle and disingenuous psychiatrist responsible for this nightmare, a man who can even make the police do a lot of play-acting to prove his theory. I can't help wishing we could have been shown his preliminary argument with them. This is merely personal curiosity and I do not advance it as a criticism of the film, the design of which would obviously have been spoiled by any such revelation. As it stands, it is good; you might say that it succeeds in a field from which that entertaining trifle *The*

Woman in the Window (with EDWARD G. ROBINSON) ran away. Try to remember the title. Presumably it refers to the conflict between the murderer and the psychiatrist, but it's not the right word. R. M.



STICKING AROUND
[G.I. Joe]
Captain Walker ROBERT MITCHUM
Ernie Pyle BURGESS MEREDITH



PSYCHOED
[Conflict]
Dr. Mark Hamilton SYDNEY GREENSTREET
Richard Mason HUMPHREY BOGART

voices from home, and who cracked up when at last he succeeded.

Conflict (Director: CURTIS BERNARD) is probably not a title that you will remember, when the film is

I Was There.

ONLY a narrow strip of salt water separated me from those twenty-two German divisions which waited for their embarkation orders on the morning of Sunday, August 17th, 1940. Their plans were not as fully known as they are now, but in my part of the world we were prepared for anything.

I was in bed at the time. Opening my eyes on a new day, I saw the face of my Section-Leader framed in the open window. "Report at the Strong Point," he ordered, and after giving me a keen and meaning look cycled off on his rounds.

"I have to report at the Strong Point," I told my wife, removing the pillow I had placed over her face for modesty's sake.

"That's to-morrow," she said, "for digging."

"No, now," I said. "And not for digging."

"Oh."

"I should think it is 'Oh'!" I said, getting out of bed and putting on my respirator.

"It'll be cold without your uniform," suggested my wife, so I took it off and put on my steel helmet, which is less of an impediment to dressing.

She sent me off with everything I needed—coffee, sandwiches, a bandage and a threepenny bottle of iodine, and a bravely fleeting kiss.

Little Mr. King, whom I overtook cycling slowly on an even older bicycle than mine, was wearing a pair of yellow oilskins and a felt hat with his uniform.

(I found out later that if he had been in the Army proper he wouldn't have been allowed to join in a battle at all, dressed like that.)

He said it was a nice morning, and I agreed, wondering in a detached way if I should ever see another.

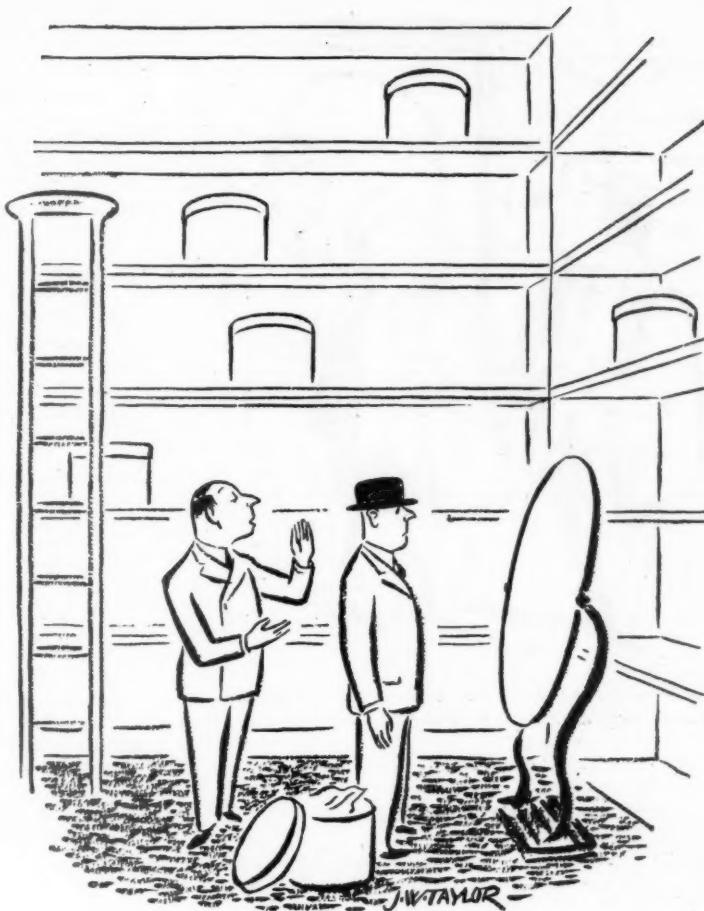
"What's this caper up to yon Strong Point, then?"

I said I thought it was most probably "it."

"Ah," said Mr. King.

Mr. Benn the butcher was sitting with Mr. Punnitt and Mr. Corker in the hole we had been digging all summer. They also thought that it was "it," and so did Mr. Smirk and Mr. Curtis when they turned up on foot a few minutes later.

The triangle of gorse which we had reclaimed from Nature was an ideal vantage-point, we all agreed. An approaching column would divide at the fork in the road, affording a double target at which the twelve of us could



"It's a bat in half a dozen, sir."

blaze away devastatingly. Mr. Corker thought it might be a good thing to fell a few trees across the road, and so divert the enemy into an ambush commanded by Mr. Corker. Mr. King, taken with the idea, wondered whether he had time to "nip back for his chopper," but the arrival of our Section-Leader prevented further planning.

We all formed up smartly in the gorse, while he addressed us briefly, telling us we could all go home.

I ate my bananas on the ride back, and my wife, who was pleased to see me, shared the sandwiches for breakfast. I was surprised to find, when I changed into my Sunday flannels, that I still had my pyjamas on, and that I had been to the war without any

ammunition (which I kept in the refrigerator out of harm's way).

The other day I found the bandage and the threepenny bottle of iodine, still tucked away in my saddle-bag. I had trapped my thumb in the coal-shed door, and they were almost enough to make a decent dressing.

I think the newspapers have rather over-emphasized the crushing defeat we nearly suffered on that August Sunday, five years ago. We should have given the enemy something to think about, in my opinion. What with Mr. Corker's ambush and my first-aid kit and Mr. King's chopper (if he'd ever nipped back for it), and the general spirit of us all, the slaughter would have been terrific. The whole twenty-two divisions would have died laughing.

J. B. B.



"You may rely on us with confidence, sir. Your suit will be ready ten months from to-day, sharp!"

Temptation

THEY have lured me on to the Links again, they have got me back to the Game
After a blessed respite in the six long years of war;
"Giving it up?" they said. "What rot! Forgotten it?
Fie, for shame!
You'll find it'll all come back to you.... And oh!
how right they are.

I know so well what'll happen, as happen it always did
When, beating my wings against the bars, I have said
"Look here, I'm through;
I have missed my ultimate two-foot putt and heaven
above forbid
That ever I handle a club again. You can raffle the
lot. Napoo!"

And always the Devil he laughed and said "You think
you're out of it, eh?"
And he set my friends to persuade me and I never could
say them no;
And then the Devil he baited his hook.... And it's
happened again to-day;
I have said I will play to-morrow, and I know how the
game will go.

To-morrow I meet the Devil with the same old box of
tricks:
Fully expecting to miss the globe, I will stand on the
Club-house tee,

And instead I shall hit a roarer, I shall knock that ball for
six
And follow it up with a perfect pitch and a competent
putt for three.

And throughout the whole fantastic round I shall play like
a man possessed,
Stroke upon stroke above my form, with a mixture of
luck and skill;
And my friends in the foursome—bless their hearts!—will
say "It's the six years' rest;
We'll be seeing you oftener now, old man." And so—
worse luck—they will.

For the Devil will walk the course with me, doing his
devilish stuff;
He will kick my ball from the bunker's brink and head
it towards the pin;
He will find me a score of perfect lies (and never of course
the rough);
He will lie on the greens and blow and blow till my putts
go trickling in.

And all the time he'll say in my ear "Now isn't this rather
fun?
Better than you remembered, eh? Had you perhaps
forgot
How good you are when you're on your game? Now that
you've once begun,
What about taking it up again?... Good shot, indeed;
good shot!"

So the fish is hooked and home I go with my handicap of ten,
Dreaming of bringing it down to six and winning a pot
as well;
And the weary cycle goes rolling on for ever and ever amen,
And my game gets worse; and worse; and worse; and
the same old tale's to tell—
Tempted and tricked; diddled and done; had for a
sucker. Hell!

H. B.

H. J.'s Belles-Lettres

THIS Belle-Lettre deals with the Spirit of Places, once a common subject, but now moribund owing to the motor-car, which makes it unnecessary to wait long enough anywhere to notice whether there is a Spirit or not. If, however, like me, you are an *aficionado* of the tricycle, if you get lost easily and can read a globe but not a map, then you will not find my theme outmoded; you will read on with panting zest, feeling that a man and brother is writing. For you, pard mine, I turn over my mental album, "memory's gazetteer," as we call it in the family, and select a place at random; others will follow, inescapably.

Kew Gardens now, how little they know of them who can identify flowers by name and just go straight to the particular plant they want to see. For me, actually getting inside at all is a feat. Dishevelled but happy, I sit down and ask myself the question "In or out?" but the out-of-doors at Kew is much the same as any garden, if slightly more so, while the indoors is unique. It is much hotter than in most private houses, except those visited by lecturers to the United States, and the plants, instead of being a mere couple of feet high at the best, stretch from the floor to the ceiling. The plant world, with man dodging

about between the stems like a mobile weed, makes one's values get turned topsy-turvy, and that is always good for an appetite. Those who live in modern flats with thin and spare decoration can see at Kew what a home could be like if only people let themselves go. The atmosphere is not air-conditioned and brisk but warm and comforting. The visitor does not wish to rush wildly about acquiring botanical information but feels drowsily content. I can never understand how they persuade the staff to accept promotion.

Years ago I had the worst tea of my life at Kew. Bad meals are stimulating at the time and have a cash value in retrospect. Some day I hope to sell a description of that meal to one of those experimental magazines which specialize in the Chekhov-at-Wolverhampton style.

Eating in institutions run by the Government for improvement but used by the public for pleasure provides a frisson quite of its own. None who knew them in their prime will ever forget the Gissing atmosphere of the British Museum tea-room which was often taken by foreigners for some strange kind of post-office, or the refreshment-room at the Victoria and Albert, all red plush and gilded mirrors, with champagne on the wine list and the can-can seeming imminent at any moment. Apart from food, however, the British Museum has the interest of the intense and peculiar life which goes on behind the scenes. To get backstage, buy a book at one of the second-hand shops outside and insist on having it examined by an expert. If you are lucky you will be invited to walk right through a bookcase into a strange world where the walls are made of books and scholars of European reputation dart about in resigned despair: being paid by the taxpayer, they are forced to answer his questions, however silly, and thus minister to the sadism in us all.

The next place which pricks through into my mind is Oxford; now there's somewhere to have a Spirit of its own. The Cadena, Stewarts, The Randolph, the Ice Rink, Mowbrays—what memories they recall! If one cares for canals there is one, and if one cares for bishops there is one, and just everything one can ask of a place is present except the sea, and no doubt Lord Nuffield, who succeeded a man called Jowett as Genius Loci, will see to that if only we alumni are patient.

Foreign climes should not be neglected by the lover of refined sensation, and, to prove myself such a one, to Waterloo I switch my muse. An exhilarating tram ride from Brussels lands one all of a rosy tingle and ready for anything. After lunch, in which veal is the *pièce de résistance*, to coin a *mot juste*, one can inspect the statue, which is of some zoological interest, and then let one's thoughts wander, remembering that here, as at Omdurman, a future British Prime Minister dealt firmly with his country's foes. Going south from Waterloo and keeping well abroad, the traveller may strike La Grande Chartreuse, which is of great psychological interest, many risking the most cunning hairpin bends in order to see a building where drink is not manufactured any more.

One place with an unusually strong Spirit is Weavers Narl, where B. Smith was born. This little East Anglian town immersed in the manufacture of sulphuretted hydrogen, valerian and size, dreams away its days remote from road, rail or river. From the marshes which run through the centre of the town rise hordes of wildfowl on the approach of a stranger, while from a lattice in the Town Hall mows and mopes the mayor. A rotting maypole slants athwart the churchyard now choked with weeds, the graves of apprentices, and spires which have fallen from time to time. The local dialect reflects the cold, grasping, self-centred nature of the inhabitants, for

example, in the absence of second and third persons to verbs. From time to time artists attempt to paint the prevailing miasma, but are soon discouraged by the aggressive Philistinism which surrounds them. The setting up of an easel creates liability to rates, and by a local by-law, all art produced within the borough limits must be strongly influenced by Wiertz. Only at the annual ball in the Assembly Rooms, ending in the traditional Dance of Death, does Weavers Narl relax—a night of terror to the local Youth Club. Sanitation, bonhomie and immigration are unknown.

Yet other places crowd upon my mind: little rural cinemas in Middlesex, what I think must have been the main square at Bradford, Brixton Prison by the light of an eclipse (I forgot of what), the outside of the railway station at Crewe, and New Year's Eve at Margate; but as a wise Frenchman said, "*Il n'y a aucun lieu comme chez-soi, comme dit un Anglais sage.*"

• •

To Sister of H.A.T.

SISTER of the H.A.T.*
We must bid farewell to thee,
For demobbéd thou wilt be.

Sister of the shining head
(Auburn, if you please, not red),
Sister of the healing hands,
Wounded men of many lands
Will remember all their days
Sister of the gentle ways.

A. W. B.

* Hospital ambulance train





"I'm selling this for a friend of mine."

October Ploughing

I SET the markers up
and dig
the coulter in to drive the rig;
the new-ground coulter
gleaming-bright:
the horses heave to feel it bite—
team-mates as left hand is to right.

My hands upon the plough-stilts feel
earth thrill beneath the ploughshare's
keel,
and straight as hand and eye can make
flows back the brown unbroken wake
rich in the sun's red morning beam—
the first of many a folded seam
for rain to soak,
for wind to rake,
for sun to sweeten, for snow to cake,

for frost to bind
and thaw to break.

Over the headland's marking-edge
six full paces from the hedge
"Halve!" I shout,
and turn the team.

'Tis quicker far, as I'll allow,
to use a six-share tractor plough,
and land-girls, to its "Chug!" and
"Chuff!"
drive their furrows straight enough.
But I've a fancy—
always had,
like my dad, and his old dad—
to plough the land for roots or corn
as they did, long ere I was born,

with two matched horses
of one height,
with harness oiled
and brasses bright—
team-mates as left hand is to right,
who know before I tell them—see!—
when to halve! and when to gee!

Yes, nod your heads as Christians
might:
You are a lovely sight! R. C. S.

○ ○

Permanent Job?

"Mr. Munford said that his resignation
from the post of Food Executive Officer
would become effective from September
31st."—*Dover paper*.



THE SEAT OF SOLOMON

"You mustn't think it's an easy place to fill, least of all for those who have to face the consequences."



"Gentleman here says he's a direct descendant of Sir Walter Raleigh."

Salute to Dockwra

WHAT do you know about William Dockwra? Not a thing.

William Dockwra was a London merchant who, in 1680, brought into existence the London penny post.

In 1680! Two hundred and sixty-five years ago you could send a packet up to 1 lb. in weight across London for a penny. "Some hundreds of receiving offices were opened" (I get all this from the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*—thank you) "from which an hourly collection was made.... There were four to eight deliveries a day in the greater part of London and ten to twelve in the business centres. The area covered by this service extended from Hackney to Lambeth and from Blackwall to Westminster": but "there was also a daily delivery, for which an additional 1d. was charged, to places ten or fifteen miles from London."

To-day, after two hundred and sixty-five years of Progress, it costs 2d. to

send the merest postcard from Hackney to Lambeth, 2½d. to send a letter of two ounces, and, I believe, 7d. to send a parcel weighing 1 lb.

There is a war off, I agree, but at the peak of our peace-time proceedings I cannot recall that we ever had four to eight deliveries a day, or ten to twelve in the business centres.

Yet the dear old State has been in charge of these proceedings for nearly three hundred years. It was in 1657 that an Act was passed to establish a government monopoly and provide for the first Postmaster-General.

Let us go back, in admiration, to William Dockwra. "This truly remarkable enterprise gave London a postal service which in some respects has never been equalled, before or since."

Well done, Dockwra! But what happened to him? "For some time," says *Enc. Brit.*, "he struggled with serious financial difficulties: but no sooner had the penny post begun

to show a profit than the Duke of York, on whom the Post Office revenues were settled, asserted his monopoly. *Dockwra was condemned to pay damages*, and his undertaking was incorporated in the General Post Office."

Poor Dockwra. But, of course, he was not the only private pioneer in this department. There was Thomas Witherings. "In 1635 he was authorized to bring into operation a re-organization of the inland posts, which he proposed to make self-supporting, instead of being a charge to the Crown, by the simple method of *making them efficient and cheap*." His posts, "travelling night and day", covered a minimum of one hundred and twenty miles a day. His rates, on the "single" or one-sheet "letter", were "Under eighty miles—2d.; eighty to one hundred and forty miles—4d." That was more than three hundred years ago.

Well done, Witherings! What

happened to him? "Owing to some intrigue he was removed from office in 1637"; but seems to have made a profit.

Then there was Ralph Allen, postmaster of Bath, who was the hero of the "cross-posts", or letters that did not go through London. Allen offered to "farm" these in 1719, and did so, with great success, for forty-eight years. He nearly doubled the post-office revenue and made a large profit for himself. Well done, Allen!

In 1784 John Palmer, also of Bath, a theatre proprietor, brought his notion of a mail-coach service to the notice of Pitt, who ordered it to be adopted. By 1797 the cost of the mail-coaches was "only one-half of that of the system they superseded", i.e., the post-boys. They would take a letter from London to Holyhead in twenty-seven hours. (Do we do much better now? I cannot tell. I never write to Holyhead.) But now, not for the last time, there was a war on and the posts had to pay. "The charge for a single letter for a distance of fifteen miles was 4d." What would poor Dockwra have thought of that?

Then, in 1840, as all the boys know, Sir Rowland Hill triumphed and the penny post was established. Yes, children, a hundred years ago you could have sent a letter anywhere in the kingdom for a penny. To-day it costs us twopence to send a card.

Personally, I am in favour of a sixpenny post, for far too many people write letters to me which require an answer. But I am ready to waive all private prejudices in this affair. Also, this is one of the few ways in which the teetotalers and non-smokers can be forced to disgorge; and there is that to be said for it. But, really, 2½d. for a letter from Hammersmith to Kensington! Let us at least go back to Dockwra and the London Penny Post.

This, brothers, is the dear old State. This is the Fairy Nationalization. The State last year collected nearly £70,000,000 in stamps for postal purposes alone. (£68,000,000 were "paid into the Exchequer".) The telephone receipts were only £43,000,000, the telegraph a mere £5,000,000.

What would be said of a private firm which charged the same (10d.) for carrying five postcards from Hammersmith to Kensington as it did for carrying four 2-ounce letters—in an age when paper and envelopes were scarce? Two ugly whispers would be heard—(1) Inefficiency! and (2) the Profit Motive!

At the General Election, whenever a speaker dared to express a shy doubt about the virtues of Nationalization,

someone always yelled from the back, "What about the Post Office?" To which one speaker, at least, replied: "Can anyone doubt that that great monopoly, the Post Office, would be much more efficient if it were handed over to Private Enterprise?" No doubt the silly fellow was wrong (though they tell me big things about the private telephone systems in certain benighted foreign countries). But, just for fun, in this time of bold experiments, suppose we go back to the good old days of "farming"—"farm" out the Post Office services to Lord Nuffield, or Lord Woolton, and see whether they can do as the Witherings and Allens did—increase the revenue, make a profit for themselves, and satisfy the postal public: not that the State cares much about that.

"But," you will say, "there was a war on, and the State must raise money somehow. What more convenient than to put something on the postcard and the letter?" All right, old boy: but see where you are getting. Very soon the State (bless her!) will be selling coal as well as stamps—and, maybe, steel and cotton goods as well. What more convenient, if the State needs money, than to put 6d. on the coal—or 2d. on the pants?" You have been warned.

I have just been weighing postcards. I put fifteen on to the scale before it registered two ounces. It would cost me 2s. 6d. to send those postcards through the post. I can send a letter of two ounces for 2½d. The letter occupies much more space—consumes a mass of paper—and wastes a lot of time.

Give us Dockwra! A. P. H.

○ ○

England

CAPTAIN SYMPSON and I are becoming interested in England, a country which we hope within two months to be exploring for ourselves, neatly dressed in our new civilian suits. Many curious facets of English life in 1945 have already been revealed to us in the *Egyptian Mail* and through the lips of travellers newly returned from leave at home. Captain Stewer is just back from London, and as soon as he came into the mess we surrounded him.

"What's the beer situation like?" asked Sympson.

Captain Stewer cackled hoarsely.

"There is practically none at all," he said. "Outside every hostelry is a beer-queue at least three miles long, with squads of St. John ambulance

men and Boy Scouts with stretchers ready to carry off the women and children who faint from thirst. And if you ever get inside the bar they give you half a pint of colourless liquid. You take a few sips and decide that the landlord must have thought you asked for lemonade, but he assures you that it is really beer, charges you about half-a-crown, and orders you roughly (nobody in England has any manners nowadays) to leave the premises. You then go outside again and join the queue for the evening session, which is due in four or five hours' time."

Major Berserk, however, who has also just come back from leave in London, paints a very different picture.

"Gallons of beer," he says emphatically, "and it is delightful to sit in the familiar bar-parlour with the beaming landlord and his son's daughter making a fuss of you and admiring your medals, while the fellows cluster round, eager to hear of your desert adventures. Of course, after Egyptian beer, you'll find the home brew rather strong, and though everybody will be anxious to fill your glass, you would be well advised to refuse, courteously but firmly, after the sixth or seventh pint."

On every subject Captain Stewer and Major Berserk disagree. Stewer says that the pinched blue faces of the unemployed made his heart ache, Berserk says that he was offered a job at £3,000 a year for doing practically nothing, with a high-powered car to do it in. Stewer says that everybody going home from the Middle East is attacked by rheumatism, neuritis, and chilblains. Berserk says that the air has a tonic effect.

"Housing, I admit," said Berserk, "is a bit tight, but everybody is anxious to help the returned warrior, and civilians will cheerfully turn out into the street, if necessary, rather than let a soldier be roofless."

Stewer said that he had to share one room with four brigadiers, a lance-corporal of the R.A.S.C., and nine Independent Poles. He says that golf on his local course was quite impossible because homeless people were camping in every bunker.

Captain Sympson and I find it difficult to reconcile the accounts of Captain Stewer and Major Berserk, and Sympson is inclined to think that they both celebrated unwisely in Port Said, missed the boat, and did not go to England at all.

○ ○

"Nursing the sick is a vacation. . ."
Schoolgirl's Essay.
Huh! You try it!



"What a shame! We can't go and see Martha after all."

The Great Apostate

JAPSON and Orken shared lodgings somewhere near Ebury Street, and both painted in water-colours, but they had little else in common. Orken worked all day and made little progress, while Japson worked whenever the mood took him and only then for an hour a day at the most, and was, in the circles in which they both moved, already famous. The ease with which Japson worked made him rather intolerant of long and tedious labour, especially when it accomplished so

little as Orken was able to do; and his distaste for the plodding of Orken grew with the passing of time. It flared up one morning when Japson found him poring over one of his sketches at the breakfast-table and even putting little touches to it where it lay on the table-cloth; and painting at breakfast had finally been too much for Japson.

"Here," said Japson, "do have a poached egg."

And he handed him one on a plate, petulantly and hastily, not as one

should hand poached eggs. If one wishes to show annoyance it can be shown even in handing a plate; indeed it can be handed in a way that is symbolical of throwing it, and Japson handed it in such a way as that, quickly and with a jerk. No more than symbolism to illustrate his impatience had been intended; but the jerk was too much for the egg, and it slithered up to the edge of the plate and over it, and went down in the middle of the water-colour. Japson was horrified at what he had done, for, though he knew the poor quality of the picture, he knew what it meant to Orken and the labour he had put into it; and it made things worse for him to see Orken sitting there looking at it without ever saying a word. He blurted out an apology and followed it with absurd suggestions about restoring the picture. But the picture was ruined, as Orken pointed out, still without saying a word, by crumpling it up, egg and all, and throwing it on to the floor. He had been six weeks at that picture, as Japson knew, and Japson picked the ball of paper up and took it out of the room, still with some futile idea of doing something to save the picture. When he got it into his studio and unfolded it, there was nothing to be seen but egg. His remorse was intense, greater indeed than it would have been if he had been the unknown artist and Orken famous and he had destroyed his friend's masterpiece. For the great and the little have the same feelings about their work, and Orken, if the position had been reversed, could soon have dashed off another. Japson sat silently thinking over the mixture of paint and egg. And thinking over such accidents usually does little good; but on this occasion, out of the intensity of Japson's regret, an idea suddenly dawned, like sunrise upon complete darkness. The picture on which Orken had been working so long was for an exhibition of water-colours, to which Japson always sent three pictures each year, their acceptance going without saying. Orken's picture might or might not have been accepted. None of his pictures had ever been hung there yet. Illuminated by his idea Japson made up his mind at once; he smoothed the crumpled paper, dried the egg and paint at the fire, took one of his own pictures from a frame of the right size, put in Orken's mess, called a taxi and went round to the exhibition. It was not long before sending-in day, the day for which Orken had been working so hard, but Japson could go in there at any time. He went straight up to the Secretary with the three pictures—his own two and the ruins

of Orken's. "Good morning," said Japson, "I've something new here." And he showed the egg and the remains of poor Orken's picture. "We sent it to the Academy, and what do you think they did?"

"Oh—er—refused it, I suppose," said the Secretary. "Of course they do."

"No," said Japson, "they would not even take it in. The hall-porter declined to receive it."

"Did he really?" said the Secretary. "Did he really?"

"He looked at it for fifteen seconds," said Japson, "and then he did that. How can a work of art be judged in fifteen seconds? Judged and condemned! And by a hall-porter. An entirely new technique, a new medium even. Do you know what medium he used?"

"I don't think I quite do," said the Secretary.

"Yolk of egg," said Japson. "An absolutely new medium. Bold and original as the technique. And all summed up and rejected in fifteen seconds. I brought it here because I wanted to see what a man of intelligence would think of it. But, whether you like it or not, look at it for longer than fifteen seconds."

"Yes," said the Secretary, "I will."

And he looked steadily at it, rather glad of the opportunity to remain silent awhile; for, however intelligent you were, it was not easy at first to find much to say of that picture. And after a while he was beginning to see dimly certain shapes, and the outline of something to say about them was gradually shaping itself, when Japson spoke again:

"It's a young fellow called Orken," he explained. "An entirely new movement. You can see it in that one picture. New medium, new technique, new everything."

"Yes, very interesting," said the Secretary.

He had gone so far, led on by Japson, and was to go further yet.

I forgot to say that about a square inch of Orken's picture remained, a piece of a line of blue hills that had not been hit by that devastating egg. Japson pointed to it now.

"Earth," said Japson, "in that one part of the picture; the blue hills of earth; and all the rest of the picture an escape from it, a triumphant flight from earth and all its rules and conventions."

"Yes, I see," said the Secretary.

"Never mind my pictures," Japson went on. "I've only brought you two this time. This is the real man. I'm only a plodder."

"No, no," said the Secretary.

"Yes, yes," said Japson. "But Orken is the man who can see as no one saw before. And this is what he has seen."

"Yes, I see," said the Secretary.

Well, the picture was hung all right and a few boys laughed at it, young things that knew nothing of art and had nothing to lose; but no one else quite dared to say that he did not see what, after all, might be there; some even saw it, some saw the magnificent flight from convention, the bold denial of all that the ages had taught, the fine freedom and the new vision, and they proclaimed what they saw. The Press were not so foolish as to commit themselves, without getting the best opinion and sounding someone who really understood it; and on the opening day they all went to Japson. "It is the escape from Earth," he said, "to a higher plane. After this picture we are earth-bound no longer. It is the challenge to all old tyrannies, all rules of the pundits. It overthrows every shibboleth. It is a picture that may be described in a single word."

"What word is that?" they asked him.

"Freedom," said Japson.

So Japson shook off from himself at last the remorse that had been a very real burden to him. And Orken got his chance, and exhibited all his pictures. But his medium was only water-colour, and though he sold that first picture for £300, he worked in poached egg no more, and never returned to what is called his earlier manner by those of a certain circle, by whom he will always be known as the Great Apostate.

ANON.

IONICUS

To His Clock

SO here at last, repentant cheat,
I quit thee of thy long deceit,
Since thy impatient hands are one
Now with the shadow of the sun
That, faithfull, tells the quiet howres
On that still altar 'mid the flowres
Whose sad and drooping leaves begin
To watch bereaving Autumn in:
And more, false sinner, thou shalt be
Bless'd by the proud Dianeme;
To thy no more deceaving face
Sweet Julia shall run apace,
And slug-a-bed Corinna bring
Her morning vows for offering.
But chief shall come to sing thy praise
That goddess of my hous-hold wayes,
No longer doom'd, by thee mis-led,
To leave, ere dawn, her idle bed,
Or make me in the darke a fyre
With brittle sticks of thorn and briar,
Glad(more than these)to know the true,
My other mistress, dainty Prue.

• •

Ah, Well

"One of the most disastrous stacks in the yard. Fortunately a fire broke out in the stackyard of Mr. G. Thornton, Ealand, on Wednesday week, resulting in the destruction of the whole of the stacks in the yard. Unfortunately none of the farm buildings were damaged."

Local paper.

• •

Let's

"Let's have a democratic free way of expressing how and whom should conduct canine affairs." —From a dog-owners' paper.



At the Play

"HENRY IV, PART ONE" AND
"HENRY IV, PART TWO" (NEW)
"THE RIVALS" (CRITERION)
"THE CONSTANT COUPLE" (ARTS)

It is indeed a week that can bring Miss EDITH EVANS to derange the *Malaprop's* parts of speech, and Mr. RALPH RICHARDSON (as *Falstaff*) and Mr. LAURENCE OLIVIER (as both *Hotspur* and *Shallow*) to show again that two stars can keep their motion in one-sphere. You will be unwise to visit the New immediately after the Criterion. SHERIDAN'S sand-castle is flattened by the great surge of *Henry the Fourth*; the laughter of North Parade thins before the gusts that shake us in Eastcheap. *Falstaff* again mounts his throne in a major performance; but the Old Vic's production of Part One—directed by Mr. JOHN BURRELL—grants us more than this. The civil broils and warring nobles are now as important as the tavern revel, and the play is alight with the blazonry of its martial verse. There Mr. OLIVIER's *Hotspur* is the high spirit, a wind from Northumberland striking towards the field of Shrewsbury. The actor is not content to be a mere paladin of the coloured plates. His *Hotspur*, restive, uncouth, impetuous, sudden in wrath and recovery, can always rule court, castle and camp. No one we remember has used more subtly and consistently the traditional *Hotspur* stammer. (His decision to falter on the "w's" gives immense effect to his truncated death-line.) This is only one point in an inspired performance. "Odds sparks and flames!" as they say at the Criterion. Before passing we must salute other pleasures from the baronial war, notably Mr. NICHOLAS HANNEN'S polished perturbation as *Henry the Fourth* and Mr. GEORGE RELPH'S crafty utterance of *Worcester's* apology for battle. Mr. HARCOURT WILLIAMS'S *Glendower* is a bristling minor prophet.

So to the Boar's Head party and to Mr. RICHARDSON's dominating *Falstaff*, stiff at the joints, supple in wit, no clumsy bombard of sack but a man of the swiftest resource. This *Falstaff*

never labours the toping and carving; he does not persuade us of his thirst, but we cannot be dubious about his shrewd and darting mind. Mr. RICHARDSON is ever in comic splendour—can the chardate at the Boar's Head have been better done?—and his performance has the quality of a fine sherris-sack. This, so *Falstaff* himself says in Part Two, dries all the foolish vapours which environ the brain, making it "apprehensive, quick, forgetive, full of nimble, fiery, and delectable shapes." Mr. RICHARDSON is supported loyally by all the tavern reckoning, including Dame SYBIL THORNDIKE, the *Quickly*. There

is quenched for ever. *Hotspur* is missing from Part Two; instead, Mr. OLIVIER'S *Shallow*, a faintly crackling husk of a man, comes as an enchantment. And none can leave an occasion among the high tides of the Vic without a note of admiration for Mr. HANNEN'S presentation of the failing King, and for the settings, costumes, and music of, respectively, Messrs. PARKS, FURSE, and MENGES.

At the Criterion, restored to the service of the stage, much depends on Miss EVANS. Formidably bedizened, and reminding us now and then of the *Red Queen*, she reconciles us to the

Malaprop's long familiar convolutions. The woman sails along from epitaph to epitaph, trilling her thick-warbled notes and mercifully unconscious that she is anything more than a mistress of orthodoxy who fully reprehends the use of her oracular tongue. It is a clever, unselfish performance, though it may not be the richest EVANS. For the rest, we have had gayer visits to Bath (here pictured by Mr. OLIVER MESSEL) than this occasionally academic excursion; but Mr. MORLAND GRAHAM keeps a brightly choleric eye on *Sir Anthony*; Mr. REGINALD BECKWITH'S *Acres* puts Clod Hall somewhere north of the Trent; and Mr. ANTHONY QUAYLE is a steady and likeable *Absolute*. The *Sir Lucius* is too pale, and *Faulkland* and *Julia* might make more of their "throb and mutual sob" in what are admittedly the evening's

most trying scenes. It is good, though, to have so full a text.

Finally to the lusty late Restoration fooling of the fourth play in the Arts Festival. We are glad to have another sight of Mr. ALEC CLUNES's flashing *Wildair*, that "airy Gentleman affecting humorous Gaiety and Freedom in his behaviour." Otherwise we need only mark the quick intelligence of Miss MARGARET VINES's *Lady Lurewell*, welcome back the worthy *Colonel Standard* of that good actor Mr. DEREK BIRCH, and suggest that those with a taste for the sultry imbroglios of the period may find *Farquhar* more amiable than some of his contemporaries.

J. C. T.



Mrs. Malaprop MISS EDITH EVANS



"There's no need to get excited—I'm registered here."

Sticking Work

IT seemed to be a very large factory, and as I thought of the job I was expecting to do my hair rose. This was a much bigger business than I had anticipated.

We walked past engines of destruction, ordinary noisy engines, through storage sheds and out into the fresh air. I took a deep breath. Supposing I was offered the managing director's job, or the secretary's, instead of . . .

My thoughts were interrupted by a gate through which we went and, distantly, I heard a voice speaking by my side. It said "I thought you'd like to see what happens to the stuff after you've dealt with it, so now we'll go to what I think is the most exciting part of the work."

My hair crackled expectantly.

We trudged down a lane, in a part of the country where the rainfall had obviously been abnormal for some years, through a gate and into a field

full of people searching for something. A hard tough-looking man, who was suffering stubble to grow freely on his face, came forward to meet us.

"Well, this is where I hand you over," my companion said.

"But my job . . . ?" I asked.

"He'll give you one," he replied, pointing to the gipsy in front of me. "See you later."

The pirate looked at me, grinned and led me towards a line of silent people crawling about on all fours.

"You start along o' them," he said.

And then I came down to earth with both hands. What had I been thinking about? Oh, yes, of course, I had for a moment or two contemplated an office job. But what could be nicer than the blue-black sky above, the cold north wind in the middle, and boots underneath which were helping agriculture by working the soil up and down? Presently I removed my hands and

looked at them. They had changed to blunt Epstein endings. Plunging them out of sight once more I bent them up and down until the sun set.

Several times I laughed with an old man who had a crude idea of fun.

"Whoa!" he'd say. And I'd stop, straighten up and look around. Then "Clek, clck," and the horse would nearly burst his collar as he extracted the cart, full of beet I had put into it. I would then return to my low-down occupation with a chuckle.

* * * * *

I was given a great reception when I got back to the office.

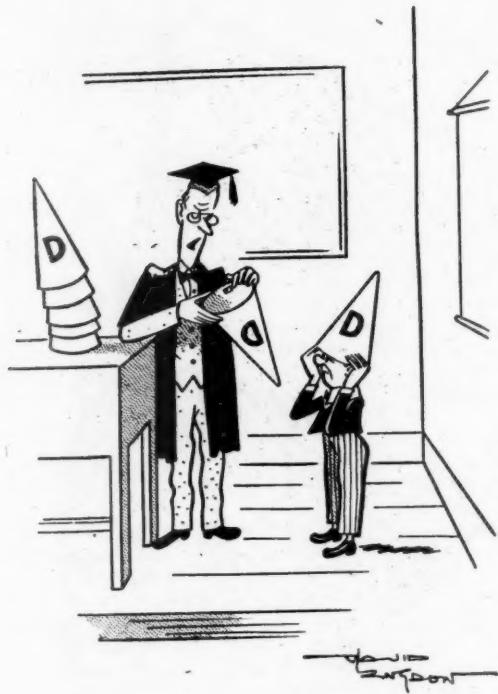
"Well done!" said my companion of the morning. "Another three weeks and we'll have it all in."

I laughed. "Only three weeks more of it? Why, I . . ."

An office boy brought in some tea.

"Sugar?" I was asked.

"I never take it," I replied.



"Try this one, then. Six and five-eighths . . ."

Our Booking-Office (By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Anna Buchan

THERE is an excellent story in *Unforgettable, Unforgotten* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 12/6) of a lady who took a house in a small Scottish town, but decided after a few weeks to leave. "I'm tired," she said, "of being told that everyone I ask about is 'quite charming.' There is only a very limited amount of charm in the world, and I have no reason to believe that this little town has a monopoly of it. Either the people here are stupidly unobservant or boringly charitable." At the outset a reader of Miss ANNA BUCHAN'S reminiscences may feel that he is in for rather more charity than he will be able to digest, but as he proceeds he will realize that Miss BUCHAN is as shrewd as she is kindly, and, some allowance made for the mellowing effect of memory, is describing a family the members of which did not merely present a united front to the world, but were genuinely attached to one another. Much of the book is occupied with the writer's eldest brother, John Buchan, whose career of uninterrupted success, as a novelist, a man of affairs and a politician, closed with his death, in the middle of the war, as Governor-General of Canada. From Glasgow, where his father had a church, John Buchan went to Oxford with a scholarship, but his numerous triumphs (he won the Stanhope, the Newdigate, became President of the Union, and even as an undergraduate made money by his pen) did not remove him from his family. While still a young man he gave his sister an annual allowance of £100, and took her on holidays to

Switzerland, and his attachment to his parents and brothers was equally strong and lasting. Perhaps the most living portrait in the book is that of Miss BUCHAN'S youngest brother, Alastair, who was killed in the last war; but her father and mother are also made vivid by her affectionate realism. Her father was uncompromising in his indifference to worldly considerations. In her teens she used to complain that she could never have a pretty party without his bringing in poor children to share the fun. In later life she and her mother, who "often deplored that she cared so much for public opinion," could never reconcile themselves to his preference for the unpopular side in church politics. A certain vagueness in her mother is illustrated in a story of how she picked up a statuette of Christ in a shop in Stratford-on-Avon, and remarked that it would be a nice remembrance of Stratford. "Oh, surely not, madam," said the woman of the shop: "Surely a nobler memory."

H. K.

A Widow at the Cross-Roads

Singing Waters (CHATTO AND WINDUS, 9/-) is at once more and less than a novel, Mrs. ANN BRIDGE having produced a somewhat ventriloquial canvassing of ideals, and an admirably picturesque setting, from, and for, a dozen rather perfunctory characters. Her inspiration derives from the native life of Albania in the early 1930s, a life sane and beautiful enough compared to that of the cosmopolitan outsiders through whose spectacles it is viewed. The mode of display entails setting out in an international train-de-luxe with a Swedish mill-inspector and a disgruntled American widow, the former preluding an acquaintanceship with the latter by an intimate scrutiny of her make-up and attire. Gloiri Thurstan, however, is not such a fool as she looks; and Nils Larsen develops more intellectual curiosity than is assuaged by well-curled eyelashes and gossamer stockings. He is, incredible as it may seem, an enthusiast for peasant cultivation, the craftsman's touch and aristocratic leadership; and he succeeds in introducing his companion to an English woman writer and an American woman doctor more practically devoted to these ideals (and to Albania) than himself. The widow's courage in renewing her wasted life on her friends' lines, produces an eminently desirable climax to an unequal but enterprising book.

H. P. E.

The Great Inimitable

Charles Dickens, like other representatives of the cheerful, solid English character—Johnson, for instance, and George Borrow—had his private hell of black moods and inward agony. Dickens would "blaze away, wrathful and red-hot" at a book until his eyes were dimmed by tears; then his energy would fade into "amazing misery"—"low pulse, low voice, low spirits, intense reaction." His emotional life kept pace with these moods, and so did his relations with his publishers; and the excitement was heightened to an almost unbearable pitch by his feeling for the theatre. His dramatic genius created not only the great scenes in his novels—the death of Steerforth, for example, or the return of Magwitch—but an inner stage where he always played the injured and the wronged. The public, perhaps, might have guessed his amazing powers, like a genie in a bottle, could only be kept under control at a risk. Yet in spite of his divorce, in spite of the almost terrifying intensity of the "Readings," during which his face would turn almost black from the mounting blood, they continued to regard him as nothing more than a genial Uncle Boz. Dickens, like other great Victorians, had a three-volume biographer at his heels—

John Forster, the historian; but Forster's "Life," though it is a noble book, naturally suppressed a great deal. Since it appeared in 1874 a mass of material has collected. There is an entire Dickensian library at the Guildhall, and a Dickensian Quarterly which now, seventy years after his death, shows no signs of running dry; the family published their memoirs, and finally, in 1938, came the first complete edition of Dickens's letters. Dame UNA POPE-HENNESSY, in her *Charles Dickens* (CHATTO AND WINDUS, 21/-), has diligently sorted out all that has been published and has consulted registry-offices, diaries and newspapers to find out more. Her book is a solid, satisfactory achievement, fairly and squarely put. She is particularly good in her descriptions of Dickens abroad and of his theatrical enterprises, and she is the first biographer to place him accurately against the rich social life of his period. Dame UNA is concerned with the man rather than the writer, but her *Dickens* will become a classic to be put beside Forster's.

P. M. F.

Astronomy Without Tears

A characteristic neo-German compilation, *Copernicus and His World* (SECKER AND WARBURG, 21/-), devotes about a hundred pages to the astronomer and the best part of three hundred to a rather indecorous *Little Arthur's History of the Renaissance*. One does not gather—apart from Herr HERMANN KESTEN's tastes, which are anti-clerical and curious—why Copernicus should be set in a framework of what the jacket calls "heroes of love" and "enormous passions." He had as little to do with Heloise and Lucrezia Borgia as with Queen Anne. His life was a good example of enlightened nepotism—the kind of patronage that made Wordsworth a Distributor of Stamps so that he could give his mind to sonnets. As the nephew of Bishop Wazelrode, Copernicus enjoyed fifteen years' study in various European universities and a canonry in Prussia. He dedicated his shattering *De Revolutionibus Orbium Coelestium* to Paul III, the Pope who asked him to reform the calendar and tolerated his lack of esteem for the science of the Early Fathers. Although his fame was tardy—Bacon was still deriding him a hundred years later—his age did well by Copernicus. In a period when, according to his biographer, "whoever thought was burned," he maintained, to his eighty-first year, his security and his standard of living.

H. P. E.

The Unquiet Grave

The Unquiet Grave, which appeared in a limited edition last year, has now been published, with some revisions, by HAMISH HAMILTON, at seven-and-six. Its author writes under the name of PALINURUS, a pilot in the *Aeneid* who fell into the Mediterranean. There he suffered a sea-change into a red herring, and has now emerged to puzzle the reader of this book in a lengthy epilogue, in which the author seeks to establish a symbolical relation between the drowned pilot and himself. This is one of many examples of the straining for effect which prevents the intelligence, sensibility, self-knowledge and wide culture of the author from doing themselves full justice. *The Unquiet Grave* is a self-portrait in the form of a journal, the entries in which record the writer's moods, reflections and memories. His prevailing mood is expressed in such entries as "Beneath the mask of selfish tranquillity nothing exists except bitterness and boredom" and "The past is a festering wound, the present the compress painfully applied . . . We are all serving a life-sentence in the dungeon of self." In revulsion against this mood, he celebrates "the bold dragonfly of pleasure," shows the door to "sick Pascal and his mouldy troupe; gaunt Kierkegaard, hunch-backed

Leopardi, wheezing Proust and limping Epictetus"; and welcomes in La Fontaine, Congreve, Aristiphus, Horace and Voltaire. It is between these two extremes, which are constantly meeting, that this interesting though unsatisfactory book oscillates.

H. K.

Clouds of Glory

We have had so many reminiscences by writers who idolize their childhood with almost unctuous solemnity that it is difficult to bear with another—especially one so charmingly written as Miss DOROTHY UNA RATCLIFFE'S *Delightsome Land* (EYRE AND SPOTTISWOODE, 21/-), though one feels churlish and ashamed not to appreciate anything written with such obvious love and tenderness, more especially because it is a tribute, and dedicated to an old nurse, who deserved her laurel-wreath. But the fact is the charm clings like a blight to all the Yorkshire characters, who should be clear-cut and might even be a little windswept. The author gives us everything as though she had had it straight from *Faulleroys*—a bleak house, a stern unbending grandfather (except when he mutters that she—the child—is so like the pretty grandmother who loved birds), gypsies, "characters," an old doctor, who had remained single for love of the grandmother and, as last straw, the ghost of grandmother herself in the final chapter. Hannah, the nurse is the central figure, and she is as wise and loving as she should be, addressing the child as "Ladykin" and "Lile Gipsy." Hannah even had a ship in a bottle, the gift of a lover who had been drowned at sea. There is a professor who taught Greek in the nursery, and was also drenched in romance. In the churchyard lay somebody, known as "Gentleman John." Yes, it is all charming, but it is also far too much of a good thing.

B. E. B.



Hollowood

"I won't say the grub was much better in the Army—but at least we didn't know what we were getting."

Sentimentalist

WHEN I was organizing the contents of my pockets before going away I found in the back of my wallet a plain white postcard, folded in the middle. It was not folded quite symmetrically, and the fold was rather ragged; also, to be honest, it was not really white any longer, but had taken on a faint wallet-colour. I did not open it out; that was unnecessary, because I knew very well what was written on its hidden surface (that is, the surface which did not say "Post Card. The address to be written on this side"). It was a short message of four words only and had accompanied a little walnut bureau, years and years ago when my wife and I used to give each other presents.

I held up the tattered memento for Dorothy to see, mentioning the occasion it marked. "It was only five years ago," she said, "and we only don't give presents now because there are no presents to give." She tried to snatch the postcard away. "I want to see what I wrote," she said.

"No," I told her. "You ought to be able to remember."

"I do," she said.

I then promoted the postcard to a place in my breast pocket, loose. I should not be able to take my wallet with me because there is a very strict limit on the weight of luggage one is allowed to take into the air.

As southern England disappeared behind me the next morning I slipped my hand into my greatcoat and pinched the little square card, comforted to think what was written there. Just before we landed at Pomigliano I pinched it again, and I patted it in a faintly congratulatory way after a dangerous journey by road to Naples.

After that it began to be more trouble than anything. Contents of pockets are always a source of worry to me, and as I moved about Italy and suffered the annoyance of its all-paper currency I found that whenever I wanted a one-lira note for a munificent tip I always handed over the folded postcard instead. It didn't matter what pocket I kept it in, or what pocket I kept my money in, that folded postcard was always in the way. I tried keeping it in my hip-pocket for

a time, but I nearly lost it twice and a third time produced it to a sceptical sentry in place of a certificate of identity.

In Greece I left it behind at the hotel and had to drive back ten miles for it, not because I was as sentimental as all that, but because by now it had started coming to hand whenever I wanted a scrap of paper to make a note on, and was already the bearer of vital information necessary to my well-being in Cairo.

In Cairo I had to use it to lengthen a short leg of my bedroom writing-table and it cost me ten piastres when a native servant brought it to me at dinner on a silver tray. It was in Cairo, I think, that it hit on the ingenious dodge of fixing itself under my fountain-pen clip, so that I twice had to stay in my room all evening while a huge ink-stain was partially removed from my bush shirt.

In Crete I unwittingly included it in a pack of snapshots which I was showing to an Army officer, and only just grabbed it back from him before he opened it—an incident which led to much "Ah-ha-ing" and wagging of roguish fingers and caused my reputation in that island to be blackened without cause. Not that it matters a great deal now, perhaps.

Flying over the desert, with the red-brown swirl of minor sand-storms below, the postcard came into its own again. In the intervals of not getting on any farther with my crossword-puzzle and making a resolution not to look at my watch again until we had sighted the "five small black-topped eminences" mentioned hopefully in the pilot's navigational instructions, I patted it comfortingly. Comfortingly to me, I mean. And I pinched it as we came in with rather a bumpy landing.

In Iraq I decided to have no more nonsense, and I committed it to detention in my cigarette-case, but it got its own back by always getting in the way of the catch, so I took to tucking it in the top of my stocking. It reacted to this in one of two ways; either it crept down and got bunched up under my foot during long and tiring inspections or it was taken off to the laundry by the ministering Assyrians and only returned to me

after prolonged investigations and the passing of pieces of silver.

On the long journey home, through bad weather and over uncomfortably jagged-looking mountains, I kept it in my breast-pocket again, patting and pinching it from time to time. Perhaps it is typical of me that once I was driving on the proper side of an English road again with the English rain beating hospitably on the windows, I forgot all about it. Fortunately for me it forced itself on my attention early on my first evening at home by repeating its Egyptian trick of removing the cap from my fountain-pen. So when I had changed my jacket I was able to come downstairs with a fond little whimsical smile and wave the postcard at Dorothy.

"I had it with me every bit of the way," I said, and she snatched at it and managed to get it this time.

"You're a sentimentalist." She began to read the back of it. "What are all these telephone numbers and things?"

"Official contacts."

"What about this: 'The Blue Slipper—Athens 0242'?"

"We have a sub-headquarters over the place."

"And 'Josephine, 1100'?"

"Code-name for a flight to Cyprus."

"I see. And what about—?"

"Darling, don't be silly," I said. "It's what's written on the inside that's important."

As she unfolded it I honestly expected it to come apart in two separate pieces.

"You mean this—'Sorry, no eggs this week'—is that it?"

I took it from her and tore it up into many small pieces. As I told her, it was her own fault for writing sentimental messages on plain white postcards that any grocer might use, when the little walnut bureau was so full of her good blue notepaper that I could never find room in it for a book of stamps.

J. B. B.

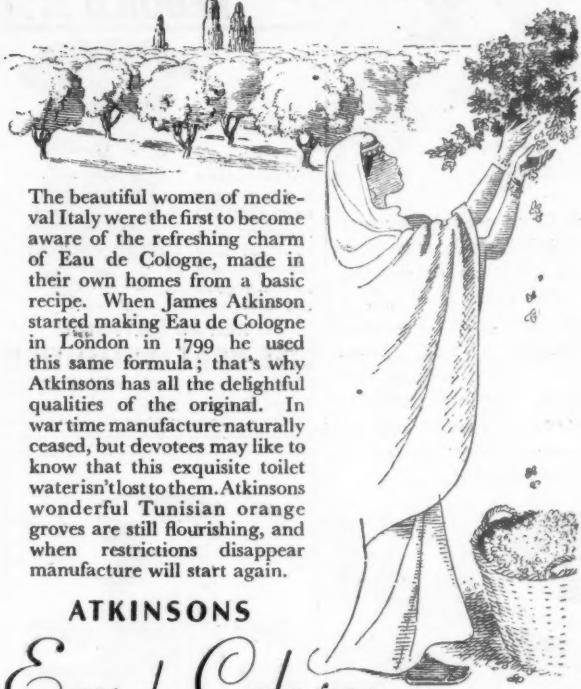
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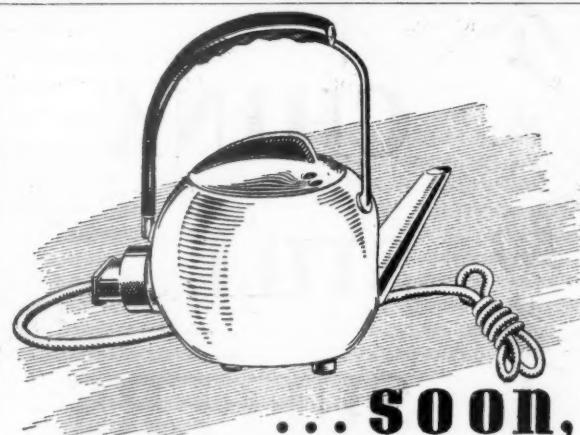
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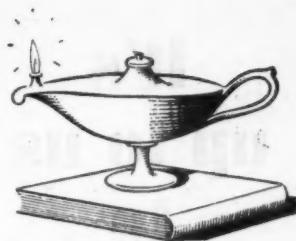
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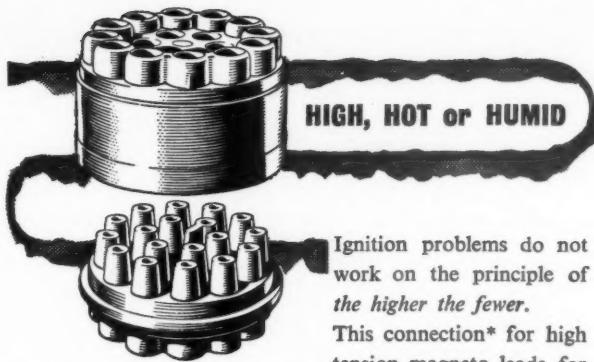
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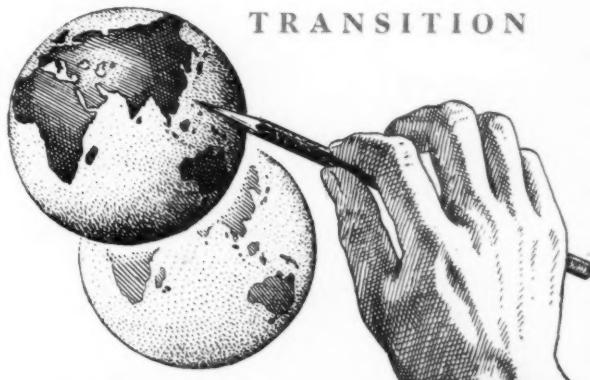


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